

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
EUR-12 ARA-10 NEA-11 OMB-01 ACDA-12 IO-13 /123 W  
-----081722 290554Z /12  
R 281454Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8858

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DEPT PASS HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, ET  
SUBJECT: PMGSE SEMINAR ON ERITREA

REF: (A) ADDIS ABABA 2715; (B) ADDIS ABABA 2846

SUMMARY: PMGSE-ORGANIZED SEMINAR ON ERITREA ENDED JUNE 27. PURPOSE OF SEMINAR WAS TO LINE UP SUPPORT FROM ALL KEY ELEMENTS IN ETHIOPIA BEHIND PMGSE DECISION TO SEEK COMPLETE VICTORY IN ERITREA. BY PARTICIPATING IN SEMINAR REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE ELEMENTS ARE NOW ASSOCIATED WITH PMGSE'S ERITREAN POLICY. SEMINAR SPEAKERS MADE A GREAT EFFORT TO IMPOSE A MARXIST-LENINIST ANALYSIS TO THE ERITREAN SECESSIONIST PROBLEM. THE REASONS BEHIND THIS IDEOLOGICAL EFFORT ARE MOST LIKELY TO (A) MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS TO CURTAIL THEIR MILITARY SUPPORT OF THE PMGSE; AND (B) TRY TO UNDERCUT FOREIGN SUPPORT TO THE ERITREANS FROM RADICAL ARAB STATES. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PMGSE "SEMINAR" WHICH BEGAN JUNE 16 ENDED JUNE 27. IT WAS NOT A SEMINAR, AND IN FORM WAS A SERIES OF  
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SPEAKERS, WITH QUESTIONS PERMITTED TO SEEK CLARIFICATION AND AMPLIFICATION OF POINTS MADE BY THE SPEAKERS. SLOGANS CHANTED IN UNISON BY THE 800-1000 PARTICIPANTS WERE USED TO GENERATE ENTHUSIASM. TO THE MILD SURPRISE OF SOME OBSERVERS, THE SESSIONS ENDED WITHOUT A PUBLIC DECLARATION OR VOTE OF SUPPORT FOR THE PMGSE'S POLICY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE FULL TEXT OF THE SPEECHES WILL BE PUB-

LISHED TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR READY REFERENCE AND FURTHER DISSEMINATION.

2. THE SPEAKERS REVIEWED THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ERITREAN PROBLEM, CONSIDERED THE APPLICABILITY OF MARXISM-LENINISM TO THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF NATIONALIZATION, ANALYZED THE ORIGIN AND PRESENT STATUS OF THE SEPARATIST MOVEMENT, LISTENED TO A CATALOG OF THE PAST EFFORTS MADE BY THE PMGSE TO RESTORE THE SECESSION (REF-TEL (B) AND WERE INSTRUCTED IN THE PRESENT MILITARY AND POLITICAL POLICY LINE OF THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (PMAC OR DIRG) TOWARDS ERITREA. PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS INCLUDED PMAC SEC GEN CAPT FIKRE-SELASSIE WOGDERESS, PMAC STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER (FOREIGN AFFAIRS) LT. COL. BERHANU BAYEH AND PMAC STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER (INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS) SUBLT. TAMRAT FEREDDE.

3. SEVERAL SPEAKERS NOTED THAT DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF THE PMGSE TO SETTLE THE SECESSION PEACEFULLY, NO RESPONSE TO ITS OVERTURES HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE ERITREANS. ONE SPEAKER NOTED THAT THE PMAC'S PATIENCE IS BEING MISINTERPRETED FOR WEAKNESS. SEVERAL STRESSED THAT THE STRUGGLE WOULD BE PROTRACTED, BITTER AND COSTLY AND WOULD REQUIRE TOTAL NATIONAL PARTICIPATION. NOT TO ACHIEVE COMPLETE VICTORY, ONE SPEAKER SAID, WOULD ENLIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DANGER THE REVOLUTION AS WELL AS ETHIOPIAN UNITY. THERE WAS EVERY INDICATION FROM THE PUBLIC REPORTS ON SEMINAR ACTIVITIES THAT, FOLLOWING UP ON PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU'S MAJOR POLICY SPEECH ON JUNE 7 (ADDIS ABABA 2559), THE PMAC IS PREPARED TO SEEK A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE SECESSION.

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4. THE 800-1000 PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTED MANY SECTORS OF ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL AND BUREACRATIC LIFE: PMAC MEMBERS, MINISTERS, COMMISSIONERS, PERMANENT SECRETARIES, REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS, ETHIOPIAN ENVOYS ABROAD (INCLUDING TWO FROM THE SOVIET BLOC ACCORDING TO UNCONFIRMED INFORMATION), REPRESENTATIVES OF PEASANT, URBAN AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, AND "A CROSS SECTION OF THE SOCIETY." THEY WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER TO GET THE PMAC POLICY LINE SO THAT THEY MIGHT TRANSMIT IT, WITH ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT, THE ORGANIZATIONS THEY REPRESENT. THROUGH THEIR PARTICIPATION, THEY ARE ALL TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTEND ASSOCIATED WITH THE PMAC'S ERITREAN POLICY SHOULD THE GOING BECOME ROUGH ENOUGH TO PROVOKE INTERNAL OPPOSITION.

5. SPEAKER AFTER SPEAKER MADE AN ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE A SCIENTIFIC-SOCIALIST, MARXIST-LENINIST ANALYSIS ON THE ERITREAN SECESSION. A SUMMARY SYNTHESIS OF THESE VIEWS IS AS FOLLOWS: THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SEPARATIST ELEMENTS IN ERITREA IS A CLASS STRUGGLE AND A FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM, FEUDALISM AND BUREAUCRATIC CAPITALISM. ERITREA, ITSELF, IS A LEGACY OF COLONIALISM, BUT THE PROBLEM GOES BEYOND ERITREA TO THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE RED SEA. THE SPONTANEOUS AND POWERFUL ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION CAUSED IMPERIALISM AND REACTIONARY  
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ARABS CONSTERNATION. THAT IS WHY IMPERIALIST AND REACTIONARY FORCES HAVE MADE ERITREA THEIR STAGING GROUND. "THE WAR IS A LIBERATION WAR BECAUSE OF THE SUPPORT OF THE MASSES AND BECAUSE IT IS BEING UNDERTAKEN TO FREE THE OPPRESSED MASSES IN THE REGION."

6. THE MORE THERE IS INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE PMGSE'S FORTHCOMING OFFENSIVE IN ERITREA AS A WAR OF LIBERATION, THE MORE IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS TO WITHHOLD SUPPORT, PARTICULARLY IF THE ETHIOPIAN EFFORT FALTERS. FURTHER, THE MARXIST-LENINIST THEME SERVES TO UNDERCUT SOME OF THE IDEOLOGICAL REASONING BEHIND THE RADICAL ARAB SUPPORT FOR THE ERITREANS AND

CASTS ANY SUCH SUPPORT AS REACTIONARY AND IN THE SERVICE  
OF IMPERIALISM.

7. ETHIOPIAN ENVOYS WERE DIRECTED TO CHALLENGE WITH  
"SINCERE AND UNWAVERING DETERMINATION THE IMPERIALISTS'  
PROPAGANDA AGAINST ETHIOPIA'S REVOLTUION AND UNITY."  
ENVOYS WERE TOLD TO MAKE KNOWN THE GENUINE OBJECTIVE OF  
THE STRUGGLE IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES OF ASSIGNMENT.  
MATHERON

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## Message Attributes

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